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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is hereby circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 February 2018]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Sport for Peace

Sport has always been a way of eliminating cultural and racial differences and bringing together the human society to experience the beauty of life in peace beyond the borders of the geographical, racial, ethnic, and above all languages, colours and cultures.

Unfortunately, in today's world, sport has been separated from its vital and effective role for affinity and reconciliation and friendship between different societies, becoming a means in the hands of the capitalists and greedy people for the sake of fame and wealth. On the contrary, sport discourse has always been a powerful means for building solidarity between people. Undoubtedly, nothing like sport can bring people closer to one another, and change their feelings regardless of their customs, race, or culture.

Sports competitions and participation of the athletes of different countries and races in sport events can always be a step towards convergence and solidarity between the human society and the prevention of racial and ethnic violence and conflicts. Undoubtedly, in a world full of violence and extremism today, it is the spirit of sport, with an emphasis on heroic and chivalrous morality, which can be a way of salvation to establish peace and friendship and to strengthen the spirit of unity in human society. As the athletes, by attending the sports fields in an atmosphere full of friendship and kindness, present a worthy model of peace, reconciliation and integration to all people, regardless of the cultural and ethnic differences and beyond any race, colour, or religious beliefs.

In this regard, Imam Ali's Popular Student Relief Society, as an NGO that has defined its mission in the development of peace and reconciliation, has designed and implemented a national sport league for children living in marginalized and poor areas called the Persian League. The Persian League, which has presented a scene to show integration, convergence, peace and friendship among different ethnicities and cultures, has been able to present a capable and unique model for today's mature world that is full of gaps and tensions by creating sports teams for children of different ethnicities who practice together friendly and honestly.

It is noteworthy that this year, along with the expansion of the message of peace and friendship, suffered children from poor areas throughout the country have participated in the Third football League, as well as the first volleyball league and the first track-and-field league. Considering all the ethical and technical beauties and pure sports scenes, they are the messenger of peace and friendship to all children around the world affected by the war and violence, wishing the world free of war and atrocity.

In the end, it is emphasized that in today's world, where religious and ethnic extremism has become a tool of the profit making of the political power, sport, in its significant social role, could be a powerful means of spreading moral and human values. In addition, the sport structures in the world must work to create social stability, reconciliation, and dialogue among societies through the teaching of these concepts based on altruism and human culture.